WILSHIRE'S

Vol. XVII No. III LONDON, MARCH, 1913 Price 2 Cents.

Direct Action *v.* Indirect Inaction

A Cartoon from the London *Daily Herald*

["Direct Actionists favour violence rather than discussion or reason."—Politician.]

THE PULPITEERING GENT. OUT OF DANGER (to Parent in pursuit of the child-consuming monster of Industrialism): "Really, really, you will gain no permanent benefit by mere brutal coercion of this monster. Leave it to my sweet tactfulness and trained power of reason!"

The American Money Trust Menaces all the World

THAT a half-dozen men had financial control of the United States was a declaration of mine twenty-five years ago. I moreover said that these half-dozen were fast translating control into ownership. I may have been hasty in my statement in 1888. What I declared then may have been more a prophecy than a fact. But anyway, prophecy or fact, it is a fact now, and I now have the statements of the owners of America themselves made under oath before the Pujo Committee to back me up.

The following from the *Evening Mail* of New York is interesting, both as to its statement of fact, but more especially as to the editor's flounderings about for a remedy.

It seems that the lamb must ask the wolf to save it, if it would be saved, from inter-locking directorates and such like new-fangled beasts that now feed on lambs:—

AN APPEAL TO REASON.

The evidence thus far given in the money trust investigation by Congress, when taken together, reveals an astounding and perilous situation in this country, a situation that must and will be changed.

The only question is whether the change is to come through a bitter, costly and unnecessary struggle between the aroused masses of the American people and the concentrated and leagued power of money and credit control, or whether the remedy is to be reached through calm, intelligent, voluntary action by those who dominate the present monstrous and intolerable alliance of national banks, trust companies, railroad and industrial corporations and other public service institutions.

There can be no longer any doubt that the danger to the nation is a real one. There has been much heat and much exaggeration. Political and journalistic demagogues have been at work. Personal malice, envy and deadly financial rivalries and feuds have played their part in whipping up excitement and ill-feeling. But the responsible testimony taken by the Pujo Committee under the authority of Congress raises an issue tremendous in its character and magnitude, an issue based on the solid granite of proven fact.

It may be a technical error to call the swift concentration of control of money and credit in the United States a Money Trust. The words are immaterial. It may be that this new and sinister power over the financial, commercial and productive activities of the country has been wrought out largely within the letter of existing laws. That, too, is unimportant.

Make no mistake, the American people will have their will, with or without the consent of the masters of Wall Street. They are not unreasonable. They have shown a capacity for patient endurance and sobriety of judgment in the teeth of great and repeated provocations; but, like all other peoples, their passions can be provoked by continued injustice; and if there is one thing clearer than another just now it is that no private interest or interests, however great, however captained by men of genius and courage, or however entrenched behind the technicalities of existing laws, can enter upon a struggle against the aroused majority with any hope of success.

One has but to consider the things established under oath before the Pujo Committee to realise the imperative necessity for a change in conditions to safeguard the liberty of business enterprise in America.

The uncontradicted evidence taken by the Pujo Money Trust Committee in Washington shows clearly that the Morgan-Stillman-Baker group in Wall Street stands at the head of the impressive combination of money and credit control which has so shocked and alarmed the country. Their immediate instrument of power consists of J. P. Morgan and Co., the National City Bank, the First National Bank, the Guaranty Trust Company, the Bank of Commerce, the Chase National Bank, and the Bankers' Trust Company. These, with their subsidiary companies, and with the Mutual and Equitable Life Insurance companies, control about a billion and a quarter of dollars. Through direct ownership, identity of directors, voting trusts or community-of-interest arrangements, the colossal assets of these institutions are dominated and, for practical purposes, controlled by Mr. Morgan, Mr. Baker, and Mr. Stillman.

The money hierarchy thus established has been shown to be dominantly affiliated with or in actual control of National Banks, Trust Companies, Insurance Companies, Railroads, Commercial and Industrial Corporations and Public Service enterprises scattered all over the country. This mighty alliance of wealth, which is dominated by the Morgan-Stillman-Baker group and its partners and agents in and out of Wall Street, consists of one hundred and twelve corporations, administered by three hundred and forty-one directors, with total capital and resources representing almost exactly twenty-two and a-quarter billions of dollars. The distribution of this controlled and affiliated power is given thus:—

One hundred and eighteen directors in thirty-four banks and trust companies, having total resources of $2,679,000,000 and total deposits of $1,983,000,000.

Thirty directors in ten insurance companies having total assets of $2,293,000,000.

One hundred and five directors in thirty-two transportation systems having a total capitalisation of $11,784,000,000 and a total mileage of 150,200, without counting express companies and steamship lines.

Sixty-three directors in twelve public utility corporations having a total capitalisation of $2,150,000,000.

This represents a rapid centralisation of power over industry, commerce and enterprise without a parallel in the history of the world. Even if the size of the interests thus combined under the direction or potential influence of a few arch-millionaires were but half true, the situation ought to stir the conscience and excite the fears of the most conservative citizen. It must be evident that no new large enterprise can be established in any part of the country again unless its securities are underwritten by or with the sanction of the Morgan-Stillman-Baker triumvirate. The evidence shows that thirty-six issues of stock made through this group, with opportunities for domination in each case, represent an aggregate value of more than a billion, three hundred and sixty-eight millions of dollars.

No wonder that Mr. Baker frankly admitted to the Pujo Committee that in his judgment this movement, which has concentrated such almost unthinkable power in a few hands, had gone far enough.

Another thing that has been proven under oath is the immense power over banks and banking exercised by clearing house associations. These are voluntary private organisations which, in spite of the grave and almost indispensable functions which they discharge in the banking system of the country, steadily refuse to be incorporated, and thus bring themsleves under reasonable public control and supervision.

It has also been shown that through identity of directors in potentially competing national banks, and in subsidiary companies of national banks, with identical directors, officers and stockholders, it has been possible, and in many cases customary, for bank directors to borrow from their own banks beyond the limits set by the law.

It is sober truth to say that all this makes a black picture. Mr. Baker was forced to confess to the Pujo Committee that if the new power over American money and credit got into the hands of bad men it would be a dangerous thing for the country.

Mr. Morgan is seventy-six years old, and has not been in the active management of his firm for about seven years. Mr. Baker is seventy years old, and on the witness stand he declared that he had had little to do with the details of his bank for five or six years. Mr. Stillman is sixty-three years old. In every direction the great figures in the control of money and business are disappearing. The stupendous power which they have massed in a few hands is about to pass to new and younger men. It is admittedly a power for inexpressible harm to the people when in the wrong hands. It is actually a power that should not be permitted in any hands. Such ability to control the capital and credit of a great nation is a menace to liberty and progress. Its very existence is immoral and anti-social.

Remedies are necessary. That point is beyond discussion. The existing Money Trust, or whatever it may be properly called, cannot and will not be permitted to endure. It is incompatible with public safety and the general public welfare.

It closes the door to equality of opportunity, and thus tramples in the dust the moral idea upon which The Republic was founded. It strikes at rich and poor alike. If allowed to continue and grow, it must be inevitably an unanswerable argument for State Socialism.

Mr. Morgan, Mr. Stillman and Mr. Baker, all white-haired men who have gained their fortunes in this their native country, should be the first to propose and support reforms that should altogether do away with the abuses revealed through the Pujo Committee. They should come out in the open at once, and take advantage of the present great opportunity to secure peace and a reasonable and intelligent solution of the situation by taking the lead themselves in the work of setting our national business house in order, a work that will be done whether they assist in it or not. Surely in a country like this there should be vision enough, leadership enough and courage enough to be found in the great banks, railway companies and other great corporate enterprises to successfully bring about a restoration of the older and better condition of financial and commercial freedom in America.

President Wilson sounded again the new note that is thrilling the purpose and policy of this continent when he warned the business men of the country that they themselves must help the Government to solve the business problems of the nation.

Really, is it not funny, too, when we see an editor as skilful in his summing-up of the findings of the Pujo Committee as is the editor of the *Mail* become so absolutely puerile in his suggestion of remedies? He seriously talks of the possibility of Morgan and Co. reforming themselves. How can they? They, of course, cannot. That is, they cannot unless they divest themselves of their money, and we may be sure that they will never do that for the mere asking.

The stupendous piling up of wealth in a few hands in America is a world problem. In reality it is more a menace to the industrial supremacy of England than is the new German navy a menace to her political supremacy. It is a menace to the industrial and financial people of all the world, and not alone to the people of the United States. It is just as simple for Rockefeller to crush a competitor in oil in Germany, or in Italy, or in China, as it is in New York. A fleet of dollars is far more powerful and mobile than any fleet of Dreadnoughts.

Talk about the danger to life in the next war from bombs dropped from airships, why it's nothing to the danger to your money to-day when Morgan sets his Money Trust at you.

However, there is an excuse for the *Mail* relying upon the Morgans to pull us out of the hole in which we are landed. We have been relying upon the Morgans to do everything for us for a hundred years, and it would be unreasonable to think we could get along without them now, especially when there is no one else proposed to take their place.

True, the editor weakly suggests State Socialism, but even if that system were possible we would have the difficulty of men. Whom could we place instead of those now in control of the Money Trust at the helm? I, of course, except Victor Berger, who is equal to any task: the more Herculean it is the better he likes it; more god-like, more natural to him.

There is but one remedy to meet the situation, and that is for an educated people to take over the industries and run them for their own benefit. But the people will never have the power to take, nor the education to manage and operate, until they have schooled themselves by means of revolutionary industrial organisation.

The Money Trust must breed its own antidote, the Labour Trust. Until it does so it is quite safe.

William Morris: Syndicalist

'William Morris and the Communist Ideal." By Mrs. Townshend. (The Fabian Society.)

IN that all-important contribution to economics, "The Servile State," Hilaire Belloc ably divides the Socialist leaders of England into two main groups: the creators, Blatchford, Hyndman and Morris; the regimentalists, Wells, the Webbs, and Shaw. The former inherit enough of the English tradition to have, in spite of their Socialism, a glimmering that the tendencies of present-day society are not toward The Great State, but rather toward The Servile State, in which, through the legislative activities of modern "social reformers," the proletariat proper, skilled artisans and such, will be reduced to that condition of chattel slavery which the Middle Ages was (momentarily) successful in abolishing. Of the creators, Morris was infinitely the greater, infinitely the least Socialistic. Indeed, had he lived to-day, we would find him emphatically denunciatory of the international Socialist movement in all its activities—save one.

This pamphlet makes it clear that William Morris was a Syndicalist.

He hated Parliament. The author of this volume quotes this saying of his: "The real business of the Socialists is to impress on the workers the fact that they are a class, whereas they ought to be society. If we mix ourselves up with Parliament, we shall confuse and dull this fact in people's minds, instead of making it clear and intensifying it."

He was ferociously anti-Fabian. He is quoted as saying in this most un-Fabian of Fabian pamphlets:—

"Philanthropy has had its day and gone; thrift and self-help are going; participation in profits, Parliamentarism and Universal Suffrage, State Socialism will have to go the same road, and the workers will be face to face at last with the fact that modern civilisation, with its elaborate hierarchy and iron drill, is founded on their intolerable burden. . . . They will see that modern society can only exist as long as they bear their burden with some degree of impatience; their patience will be worn out, and to pieces modern society will go."

Further he said:—

"The burden of the statesman is to balance the greed and fears of the proprietary classes against the necessities and demands of the working class. This is a sorry business, and leads to all kinds of trickery and evasion, so that it is more than doubtful whether a statesman can be a moderately honest man."

He emphasised the Syndicalist ideal. He was antagonistic to the ideals political of the German Socialist Party of to-day, of the dominant leaders of the French Socialist Party of to-day. He would have been, had he lived, Ramsay MacDonald's chief opponent in England. He would have argued with Hyndman on Marx, his "Capital," his economic analyses, his fatalistic belief in "economic evolution" as tending toward the comparatively prompt arrival of The Socialist State through the political representation of Labour in Parliamentary bodies. A careful reading of his economic and political writings gives strongly the impression that his Earthly Paradise was to consist of loosely federated guilds owning the instruments of their industries. The State was to him an oppressor, because he saw, as Syndicalists and many other "Socialists" are discovering, that ownership of public utilities by the State means, with few exceptions, government and control by the politicians. Morris was a Mediævalist. He absorbed and gave comparatively complete expression to the economic ideals of the Middle Ages. He called himself a "Socialist" because, as G. K. Chesterton has delightfully expressed it, in those days one had to call one's self a Socialist or be considered a crook, a sympathiser with the capitalistic results of the Industrial Revolution, an opponent of the justifiable claims of Labour. "News from Nowhere" was a poetic expression of the economic creed of the Master. His wallpapers were another. And in each the ideals he there expressed were combatively in opposition to the methods and creeds of the Socialist movement. Some day we shall appreciate Morris's economic teachings. That will be when we come to realise that capitalistic society is developing not, as Marx prophesied, into a Socialistic State, but more and more toward an abrupt return to those servile conditions which, by law, shall break society into two parts, the freeman and the slave, in proportion of one to ten thousand.

—L. H. W. in the Book Review Supplement of the *New York Times.*

The Wilshire Bishop Creek Mine will go into operation this month.

Established 1900

WILSHIRE'S MAGAZINE

Published Monthly by
Wilshire Publishing Company
GAYLORD WILSHIRE,
Editor.
Subscription, Post Paid to any address in the World, 25 cents or One Shilling per year.
38, CLERKENWELL GREEN, E.C.
London

Vol. XVII **March, 1913** **No. 3**

The Psychology of Syndicalism

SYNDICALISM is essentially a theory of the inevitable development of a unified economic Labour organisation, formed as a reflex to the more or less trustification of capital already in evidence.

Whether this economic organisation begins as a federation of local groups of craft unions, as has occurred in France with the C.G.T., or whether it will take the shape of a direct federation of existing unions conjoined with further organisation of the unskilled workers, as is Tom Mann's plan in England, or whether the I.W.W. plan of Haywood, Ettor, and Giovannitti, in America, of practically ignoring the existing craft unions and forming new industrial unions, is a matter of no consequence as to the use of the word Syndicalism, for the word embraces all such forms of activity. The essence of Syndicalism is Revolution by means of the unions; the essence of Socialism is Revolution by voting. The Syndicalist looks on the vote as, at best, merely a means of reform, and the Socialist looks upon the strike as the Syndicalist looks on the vote.

This difference of attitude as to the vote and the strike is what differentiates the Syndicalist from the Socialist in every country in the world where Revolutionary Unionism has made its appearance.

A man may be a Syndicalist and yet vote for a revolutionary Socialist for Parliament, but he will not vote for him because he believes in "using all the revolutionary weapons," but because he thinks the vote has merely a reform value. Moreover, a Syndicalist may vote for a capitalist candidate for exactly the same reasons and still remain a Syndicalist. Even he may be a Catholic or a Methodist or a Jew or an Atheist and still remain a Syndicalist. Syndicalism takes no more note of how a man votes than how he prays. Let him be true to his revolutionary union; that is sufficient for the time being.

No doubt, as he grows older in the faith of Syndicalism, he will grow colder in his faith in praying and voting, but that is neither here nor there.

Voting is merely praying in a ballot-box.

The revolutionary union is the product of the automatic machine and the trustification of capital. It is the only form of organisation which can meet the present juncture, for the knell of craft unions was rung by the automatism of the machine.

The revolutionary industrial union is based upon the commodity produced without reference to the particular craft the workers engage in when they produce it. While this kind of a union is admittedly primarily formed to meet the present industrial situation and gain reforms for the workers—i.e., better wages and better hours—nevertheless, from its very form of organisation, it will inevitably give the workers a consciousness of their own power to absolutely control the machinery of production without any help from the capitalist. This is something craft unions never do. The new union is psychologically imperatively a revolutionary union.

And because it gives the workers consciousness of their power, it also shows them the uselessness of using the vote to gain indirectly through electing politicians what it is now evident to them that they can take over to themselves directly.

Syndicalism is simply an up-to-date and scientific interpretation of working-class psychology. Socialism was a good prophecy of the inevitability of the form of combination to be developed by the capitalists, the Trust, but it failed to realise the form of combination to be developed by the workers in answer to the Trust. Syndicalism, in the light of present-day experience, has formulated a present-day programme.

What is Really the Matter in Mexico

THE base of the insurrection in Mexico lies in the expropriation of the land of the peons by the State and its subsequent appropriation by the Mexican landlords. Much of it has since found its way into the possession of rich Americans.

The onslaught on the old Diaz régime had been carried on for years by the Mexican patriots against fearful odds, and finally, when it came to look like winning, Madero, a rich landowner, threw his sword into the balance and carried the day.

The revolutionists always looked with some suspicion upon Madero, but it was everything to beat old Diaz, and they supported him on the chance that conditions might be better. But, as a matter of fact, land tenure under Madero showed no improvement upon that under Diaz. It was not long before the revolutionists realised that they had been deluded by false hopes, and the insurrection fires, quenched for a short period, blazed up again.

Zapata became the leader of the insurgent peasants, and for the past year it has been war to the knife, with no quarter from either side. The movement grew and grew until the position of Madero became almost as insecure as that of old Diaz had been when Madero went to the aid of the previous insurrection.

A counter movement against Madero was also engineered about six months ago by young Diaz, a nephew of the exiled Diaz, but it was shortlived. Young Diaz was captured and sentenced to be shot, but Madero relented, and merely imprisoned him. This is where Madero seems to have made a tactical mistake, from his own point of view, for this present civil war has come about through the friends of young Diaz making an assault on his prison, freeing him, and then putting him at the head of their forces.

Young Diaz, it would now seem, is practically in control of Mexico City, and has announced himself President of Mexico, and Madero is fighting for his life. (*Some prophecy, what?*—G. W.)

Meanwhile Zapata, the head of the peasants' insurrection, is without the city with his army, evidently rather puzzled as to what course to take. He has had the lesson of Madero stealing the fruits of victory from the peons when they had almost conquered old Diaz, and he does not wish such a drama to be re-enacted.

Between Madero and the younger Diaz—or, for that matter, the old Diaz, who is undoubtedly financ-

ing his nephew—there is practically no choice from the point of view of the peon. Both Diaz and Madero will stand for the perpetuation of landlordism, as Zapata and the peons know only too well. The fight now proceeding in Mexico City between Diaz the younger and Madero is a fight between sections of the landlords, and is in no sense a class war such as Zapata has been waging against Madero.

How it will all end is difficult to forecast. It looks at present as if young Diaz will oust Madero, and that then there will be a fight to the death between young Diaz and Zapata.—Editorial by G. W. in *Daily Herald*, London, Feb. 15.

The Peons must have Land

POOR Madero! Another idealist gone wrong! Madero was the son of a wealthy Mexican landowner, who saw the misery of his countrymen under the despotism of Diaz and set out to remedy it and create a revolution by combining exploiters with exploited. He united capitalists who had not received their share of the Diaz graft, and the starving peons who had never received a living share of the product of their labour.

Madero was successful enough in dethroning old Diaz and in retiring the Diaz ring of capitalists in favour of his own family and his capitalist backers, but when he started to carry out his land promises to his peon supporters his troubles commenced.

Mexico is controlled by an oligarchy of 10,000 landowners; the rest of the people are poverty-stricken and illiterate, 80 per cent. being pure Indians. Hence, when Madero tried to put in force his programme of "divide the land," although he had the vast majority of the people on his side, yet they were completely unorganised, and hence helpless to back him up. His own capitalist backers naturally gave him no support in his land programme; in fact, his own family went back on him. He was a puppet. He never did have the sympathy of his capitalist supporters, and it was not long before the peons, seeing nothing being done for them, deserted him. His fall became an absolute certainty.

However, the assassination of Madero will not solve the land problem in Mexico, and it is quite certain that General Huerta has no intentions in that direction.

Zapata is the only hope of the peons, and he seems unable to do much beyond conducting a guerilla fight.

Sooner or later the United States must intervene, but even so there is no possibility of peace in Mexico unless the peons are given much land now held by Mexican and American landlords.

We probably shall see a plan finally adopted somewhat after that by which the Friars' land was restored to the Filipinos.

Such a plan would combine a measure of justice to the peons together with economy, for nothing is as costly as war.

What's to be Done, Gentlemen?

THE Pujo Committee and the relentless cross-examination of Morgan, Baker, and other magnates in disclosing the enormous economic power of a half-dozen in the United States is merely confirming what I myself have been declaring for twenty-five years.

Nothing new in it all. The question is, what is to be done about it all?

Robert Hunter's Bogey Man

ROBERT HUNTER is a writer whose profundity is most obviously convincing to—himself. He is now delivering himself at great length upon the subject of the general strike. Most of his stuff is either platitudinous or quoted, so that one finds little to comment upon except the unusual dulness.

However, his statement that the "idea of an inner clique playing a great part in the Syndicalist movement" is amusingly untrue. Hunter declares, inasmuch as the Syndicalist avows his belief in the potency of the conscious minority controlling the unconscious majority, that this constitutes a tacit admission that he would have "an inner clique lead the ignorant and inert mass."

If there is one movement in the world that is open to the light of day, and whose breath of life is frankness, it is the Syndicalist movement.

In fact, it is the very characteristic frankness of the Syndicalists in admitting that a conscious minority can and will control the unconscious majority which has led to Hunter's ignorant talk about "inner cliques."

The conscious minority referred to by the Syndicalist are the men organised in the revolutionary industrial unions, and the unconscious majority are the men who are inert because they are outside the unions, and therefore have no power and no initiative which comes through organisation. The minority never disguises from friend or foe the fact that it is a minority; but, on the other hand, it openly declares that though a minority it has power over the majority. If the majority does not wish to be dominated it has an easy remedy: let it organise itself.

Let it become conscious!

Wilson Counsels Direct Action

WOODROW WILSON gives signs of great perspicacity about some things even if he does talk considerably more or less at random occasionally.

He said recently:—

"I want, above all things, to enjoy the confidence of, and to have at my service the information and counsel of, those who are engaged in these fundamental things. Most of the vitality of public action comes from outside the Government. The Government does not originate. It responds to public opinion. You are all to regard yourselves as forces playing upon the Government, and I hope that during the next four years you will find a sensitive part of the Government at the top."

I don't think the necessity of Direct Action upon the State, if you wish to have it do anything, could be better stated than in the foregoing.

The President, you will note, does not say wait till election day and then elect your man to carry out your wishes; not at all—he says the Government will never move till you play your forces upon it. Do it now, says Wilson.

How We Won't Revolute

A MOST instructive lesson in how we cannot expect to vote ourselves in has been afforded by the way Meyer London was obviously counted out in New York City and Stanton ignominiously kicked out of the Kansas Senate.

The New York *Call* is trying to whistle up its courage by declaring that they can't keep on kicking

us out for ever. That is what the negro governors and their satellites of the Southern States during reconstruction days used to think.

Unorganised labour has about as much chance of electing and seating its men in office when organised capital really decides that it doesn't wish them seated as have the negroes of Mississippi a chance of electing a governor.

Wilshire Debates on Syndicalism

SYNDICALISM is not really a good question for a debate before a general audience, for it is a theory of action for organised workers.

Suppose hours and wages are bad in a certain locality, it is obvious that the remedy is an organisation of labour which will force the employers to ameliorate conditions. When this organisation is formed, and the workers have had their intelligence developed by it through the consciousness of power which organisation gives, then, and not till then, will they be in a receptive mood to hear the Syndicalist theory of Social Revolution. In other words, Syndicalism is a theory which requires a prepared audience, prepared by economic organisation.

Hence, when a Syndicalist debates with a Socialist before a mixed audience of unorganised people, he is departing fundamentally from his proposition that Syndicalism is for the elect, and to talk it to the general public is wasting breath. If your audience is unorganised and mixed it could not, even if it would, embrace Syndicalism, not except in theory. Now, the Syndicalists are not after theory, but action, and therefore they do not endeavour to propagate their ideas from the street-corner to passers-by. Such a course would be supremely foolish on their part, while on the part of the Socialist orator it is quite in reason, for he never knows when he may pick up a stray vote from the current. However, from a purely academic standpoint a debate on Syndicalism is interesting; at least, I found it so in my debate with Mr. Fisher, held last month in Chandos Hall, London, the headquarters of the British Socialist Party. Mr. Fisher was until recently a member of the Executive of that body.

He is a good speaker, of the long and impressive period order. Upon the proposition that oratory is only brought out on great occasions, I feel flattered that Mr. Fisher should have given to the world his estimate of the importance of our debate by letting flow his best brand of eloquence so freely. I was almost drowned in the torrent, and came out of the fray quite like a wet kitten. However, I will let an unbiased witness to my unquestioned submersion in the wordy deluge give his account of the flood. The organ of the British Socialist Party, *Justice*, rather significantly had no account at all of the debate, although no affair ever held in the hall before turned so many away from overflowing doors. The following is from the *Christian Commonwealth*:—

SYNDICALIST v. SOCIALIST

Debate between Mr. Gaylord Wilshire and Mr. Victor Fisher

In a small hall packed to suffocation last Sunday night Mr. Gaylord Wilshire and Mr. Victor Fisher met to debate the proposition "That the vote is useless as a means to Socialism." The discussion really turned upon the question of Syndicalism, and Mr. Wilshire, who is the leading representative of the Syndicalist propaganda in this country (though he is an American), took very little pains to conceal his indifference to the political reference in the resolution. Mr. Halliday Sparling presided. There was the greatest possible contrast between the two debaters. Mr. Fisher was rhetorical, declamatory, and forcible, much the better speaker in the technical sense, with a ready flow of well-turned phrases. Mr. Wilshire had no platform graces, and his attitude throughout suggested a mild surprise that he had been drawn into a futile discussion. He did in fact say that the debate was purely academic, and that he was not much concerned with the result, inasmuch as the Syndicalists did not try to convince by intellectual argument. Their propaganda advances as the psychology of the worker changes with the rise of a new form of industrial organisation. The difference between the two speakers resulted in Mr. Fisher having all the applause and Mr. Wilshire all the weight of argument. The latter's lounging indifferent appearance is very deceptive. He made his best points with quite a casual air, and, disdaining any attempt to drive them home by any display of rhetoric, they seemed to have less meaning than Mr. Fisher's resounding periods, until you examined both.

The main argument put forward by Mr. Wilshire was that a newer form of industrial unionism is coming into being, which organises the workers on the lines of their product rather than upon the craft basis as at present. This change from craft to revolutionary industrial unions has a powerful psychological effect upon the workers themselves. They have a different feeling towards the whole mechanism of industry. On the other hand, they are asked to vote as unorganised units, and the act of voting seems to have little relation to the main interests of their lives. The tendency is not to vote upon political questions; but when an industrial or economic question is raised in a union a very large percentage of the total members is polled. Further, the mere sending of a representative to Parliament has no meaning. The proprietary class cannot be voted out of the economic power they possess, and when the workers have the economic power they have everything that matters, and can take whatever there is to take.

Mr. Fisher argued that it did not follow because he declared the vote was useful that he believed industrial action was useless. He believed in both. They had not yet tried revolutionary political action, and therefore could not say whether it was worthless. He did not think it was practical wisdom to leave the capitalist in possession of the machinery of the State. A national strike would be impossible because the workers and their wives and children would be the first to suffer.

In its later stages the debate resolved itself into a persistent restatement from Mr. Wilshire of one or another point in his arguments, while Mr. Fisher, growing more and more sure of victory, hammered heavily upon some of the weak points, and carried the majority of the audience with him away from the main argument of Mr. Wilshire. But the latter was by no means perturbed, and probably left the hall without any consciousness of defeat.

Excessive Bail Unconstitutional

Excessive Bail shall not be demanded.—U.S. Constitution.

Frank M. Ryan, president of the International Ironworkers' Union, sentenced to seven years' imprisonment by the Federal Court at Indianapolis for conspiracy to transport dynamite in passenger cars, has been released on $70,000 bail.

There is a constant violation of the spirit of the Constitution in the excessive bail nearly always being demanded in labour cases. But what are laws but to be broken?

The Workers' Only Hope: Syndicalism

By Andre Tridon, in *The Independent*

WHETHER a strike ends in victory or defeat, the suspense is soon over ; furthermore, the strikers themselves are caring for their own interests ; the strike is an education for them, as it affords them more leisure to discuss conditions from every point of view. In the meeting hall they become better acquainted with one another ; in certain cases, as in the Lawrence strike or in the cooks' and waiters' strike, the public is apprised of facts which could not have been exposed through any other procedure. At the end of the conflict the men, beaten or victorious, are better united for having fought together shoulder to shoulder.

This is, roughly speaking, the difference between Parliamentary action and direct action. Direct action, however, should not for a minute be construed as synonymous with striking. Direct action is a new and elaborate weapon, the most formidable which the working classes have ever used ; it is so formidable, in fact, that trade unions and Socialists are quite afraid of using it, and the latter have passed a motion disqualifying any member of the party who advocates direct action.

Direct action admits of strikes, but not the kind of strike with which the public is familiar. If the unionised typesetters demand an increase in wages of $1 a week they may leave the shops until the increase is granted, after which they will sign with their employers an agreement by which they bind themselves to work at the new rate for two or three years.

On the other hand, a successful Syndicalist strike, like the Lawrence strike, assures the workers certain advantages, and gives the employers no guarantee of peace. The fact that the satisfied mill hands returned to work did not imply the settlement, even temporary, of a Labour dispute. It was a mere truce during which the attacking forces planned to recuperate and fit themselves for a renewed attack on an enemy with whom no treaty shall be signed, and who must finally either destroy the workers or be destroyed by them.

During the periods of apparent peace intervening between strikes, direct actionists keep up the hostilities—though in a different manner. Defeat or victory are preceded and followed by sabotage. Sabotage, at least in the opinion of many French Syndicalists, is an essential of direct action. Strikes are mere tests of strength and part of the training which the workers must undergo in order to be ready for the general strike.

It may be mentioned before going any further that American Syndicalists prefer to be spoken of as Industrialists. This for two reasons : It is only recently that the French word " syndicalisme " has acquired its present connotation (" syndicat " meaning simply union). Furthermore, certain Anarchist groups in this country wish to be known as "syndicalist circles," with which the Industrial Workers of the World repudiate all affiliation. The practical matter of fact is, scientific industrialists of America have nothing in common with the erratic visions of the Anarchists, nor have Syndicalists or Direct Actionists anything in common with either Socialists or unionists The Socialist pins his faith to a propaganda which may some day result in a Socialist victory at the polls, after which a Socialist majority will do its best to introduce socialistic institutions in the land.

Unionists recognise the existence of two classes, labourers on one side, employers on the other. While Labour wishes to receive a fair wage for a fair day's work, it does not deny employers the right to exist as such.

Syndicalists scorn the idea of a "campaign of education." They want results, immediate results, secured with the least expenditure of cash and energy. Secondly, they do not recognise the employer's right to live any more than a physician recognises the right of typhoid bacilli to thrive at the expense of a patient.

Finally, while both unionists and conservative Socialists believe in action by a decided majority, Syndicalists contend that direct action by a live minority is more productive of results than the grouping around of a sluggish majority. Pouget writes :—

> Syndicalist action has nothing to do with government or majorities. If we obey the will of the majority, we allow ourselves to be led by the spineless ones, by the standpatters who are always willing to be exploited. Keep your eyes open and you will soon notice that only the men of strong will, the rebels, those who are impervious to the influence of a mop-like majority, are doing work that counts.

Majorities are too inarticulate to express their wishes in legal or parliamentary parlance. When they succeed, now and then, in expressing a wish and vote into Parliament a " friend of labour " his morals are very soon corrupted by political dickering and entanglements.

The example of Briand, once an uncompromising anti-militarist and direct actionist, compelled much against his desire to wield the militarist club above strikers and beat them into submission, will for many years supply Syndicalist orators and pamphleteers with evidence as to the uselessness of Parliamentary action. If a President du Conseil, the most powerful temporary ruler in Europe, supported by a solid majority, was unable to carry out any Socialist measures, and had to abandon the workers' cause for fear of national and international complications, what inducement is there for the working man to finance electoral and educational campaigns of long duration or a continued propaganda ?

Syndicalists hold that propaganda is a mere matter of expenditure in which the workers find themselves at a disadvantage. Also Yvetot points out the fact that a considerable increase in the Socialist vote in a community merely brings about a coalition of the other parties which postpones the advent of a Socialist majority until a more distant future.

The Milwaukee case illustrates fairly well the truth of the French leader's statement. Socialists won easily as long as Republicans and Democrats fought their battles separately. As soon as both parties combined Milwaukee was lost to the Socialist rule, and the conservative propaganda, unhampered by the financial difficulties which beset radical organisations, will speedily offset what was gained in pre-Seidel days.

" The best form of popular propaganda," Haywood once said to the writer, " is quick results." And he added :—

> It is easier to lead men away from the mill than to the ballot box. And what does the crowd care for a restricted ballot when, by the mere act of striking against certain abuses or for certain advantages, every human being, native or foreigner, man or woman, child or negro, is given the franchise and a hand in legislation, provided that human being is a producer ?

A strike according to the Syndicalist formula is quite a different thing from a strike according to the Labour union or Socialist formula. As William Trautman points out in his pamphlet, " Why Strikes Are Lost," successful direct action demands two conditions, without which strikes are most likely to end in defeat : the workers must be able to

strike at the very time when mills and factories are rushed with orders, and are least able to stand a sudden cessation of production ; secondly, they must close not only one part of a mill or factory but the whole plant. Therefore, no agreement binding either the whole working force or one craft must ever be entered into with the employers.

All crafts must be ready to stop work simultaneously at any time. The mere bettering of living conditions is not an aim but a means to an end ; the end being the ousting of the employers as such, and the taking over of their industries by the workers. This will be brought about by the general strike for which, according to Griffuehles, former secretary of the French General Federation of Labour, " the workers must keep themselves in training, a training more rigorous every day."

Servants or Men?

Daily Herald, Saturday, February 15

WITH the complete fusion of the three principal railwaymen's societies into one National Union of Railwaymen, there comes into existence the biggest trade union in the world, a society embracing over 180,000 men of the most diverse grades engaged in the manipulation of traffic and upon the permanent way. Nor will the new society be restricted even to those grades now included, for by its constitution the widest interpretation is placed upon the word "railwayman," so that all who draw wage or salary from a railway undertaking may claim to be enrolled among its members.

It will be remembered that this is the interpretation which the *Daily Herald* did not hesitate to place upon the new rules, noting the significance of this and seeking to warn the rank and file of railwaymen against possible attempts to obscure or impair so wise and generous an intent.

For this interpretation the *Daily Herald* was criticised and condemned in quite unnecessarily bitter language by one of the most prominent of the railwaymen's leaders. The rank and file, however, repudiated the threatened restriction, and declared for our interpretation, thus justifying our action, which was taken solely in the interests of the railwaymen themselves and of the future of their new amalgamation.

The draft rules of the new organisation were adopted without anything but slight verbal amendments, and membership will be open to all persons, male or female, in receipt of a salary or wage from a railway company. The idea of the promoters is to make the membership so representative that in the event of a strike being necessary all persons in the employ of a railway company shall be called out. Mr. Albert Bellamy, the late president of the A.S.R.S., was unanimously chosen as the president of the new organisation, whose headquarters will be at Unity House. The adoption of the scheme will be followed by a systematic campaign for the enrolment of non-unionists, and every effort will be put forth to force all railway workers into the Union.

But for the spirit of the rank and file the new organisation would have come into being as the National Union of Railway Servants. They would have none of it. Henceforth they were to be, not railway servants, but railway MEN.

Among the railwaymen the old servile, obsequious feeling is dead. So it is among the best of the workmen in all industries. But, unhappily, the old Adam has a tendency to crop up in a new and more insidious form among working-class leaders, especially among those who sit amidst cotton-spinners, ironmasters, coal-kings, and money-lords in the House of Commons.

Men of sterling personal character, who have earned the confidence of their fellows, they are not to be browbeaten, nor are they open to the grosser forms of flattery, but by subtle appeals to their "common sense," their "statesmanship," their "intelligence," the old ends may often be accomplished by the astute and experienced politicians who surround them.

The success of the biggest trade union in the world depends upon the alertness of the rank and file in seeing that this new force remains in fact, as in name, one not of Servants but of Men.

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, referring to the new union says :—

"What it means is that the leaders in this movement want to be in a position to hold up the country—in other words, it is Syndicalism pure and simple. Syndicalism may be repudiated, but what else can it mean?"

What is Art?

Haldane Macfall in the *Art Journal*

WILLIAM MORRIS defined Art as "the expression of pleasure in work." This might largely define the enthusiasm, indeed the joy, in achieving fine craftsmanship; but it has nothing to do with Art. It is not even a complete definition of craftsmanship; though, to some extent, like Beauty, it is so, since perfection of handling, like perfection of anything, must generally produce an effect of beauty, or something akin to beauty. William Morris wrecked what might have been a great artistic career by essaying to employ the craftsmanship, and by seeking to see through the spectacles, in prose and in design, of dead artists, whose age and vision were wholly alien to his own age and vision.

Art is the splendid garden of man's imagination, the wayfaring by which he reaches to the majestic realm of his fullest experience, the wide highway whereby he steps from his petty agonies into the vast communion of his fellows, inherits the ages, and reaches out to his fulfilment. Art is a garden wherein blossoms the richest and the largest knowledge of life, wherein man may find a harvest for the reaping, abundance for the gathering. Without Art he lives in the sordid garret of a paltry loneliness with his own petty soul. He has but to step into the garden of Art in order to walk with the giants; hold communion with the saints; know the exquisite ecstasies of life; thrill with the impetus of the noblest passions; enlarge his heart and brain with the fellowship of such as have trod the vastnesses and have suffered with the broken, have known pity and triumph, been purified by compassion, and have strutted it to the stately measure of heroic impulses. There is no sensation that he may not experience, and, experiencing, live, if he shall wander into the splendid wayfaring.

Another New Book on Syndicalism

" Syndicalism and the Co-operative Commonwealth (How we shall bring about the Revolution)." By Emile Pataud and Emile Pouget, with a Foreword by Tom Mann and a Preface by Peter Kropotkin. Translated by Charlotte and Frederic Charles. (The New International Publishing Co., Oxford, England.) Cloth ($1.00 post paid to U.S.A.) 3s. 6d net. Paper, 2s. 6d. net.

THIS is a book by Emile Pataud ("le roi Pataud") of the Electricians' Union, and Emile Pouget of the Confédération Générale du Travail, two of the best known French Syndicalist leaders. It gives one of the best existing descriptions of Syndicalism in the form of a vivid historical story of the Syndicalist transformation that is supposed to have taken place in France, and an intensely interesting account of the new institutions at work, told by two men who had lived through this wonderful time. It is an indispensable book for all who wish to understand the aims and methods of French Syndicalism.

A French review says of it :—

"The story is laid in the spring of 19—, and the authors enable us to be present at each phase of the great Revolution.

"The General Strike has been proclaimed. From Paris it has extended to the provinces, not only to the urban centres, but also to the agricultural districts. The Government tries to combat it. It is unable to. It is in the first place paralysed by the people's power of inaction; and finally, abandoned by the army, it is overthrown.

"On the ruins of Parliamentarism, of State and capitalistic centralisation, there arises a society of freedom and well-being, industrial and federalist. We take part in the birth of this new world, in the reconstruction of all our institutions; we see how production, exchange and distribution are reorganised, and we note that Science and Art take a high place in the city of the future. Amongst the variety of incidents with which this work abounds, one of the most intensely interesting is the picture of the last war; the Revolution holding its own, without armies or soldiers, against the contra revolution, and destroying the armies and fleets hurled against it."

Kropotkin says: " . . . . this book should be spread everywhere, read everywhere, discussed everywhere."

Orders will be filled by WILSHIRE'S MAGAZINE.

Printed for the Proprietors by the Twentieth Century Press (1912), Limited (T. U. and 48 Hours), 37a, Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C.